

# KEHOE'S CORNER

*News from the office of Senator Christine Kehoe*



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## Committees

- Local Government, Chair
- Budget and Fiscal Review
- Energy, Utilities and Communications
- Natural Resources and Water
- Transportation & Housing
- Joint Committee on Homeland Security and Emergency Services, Chair

## Kehoe Moves Bill to Increase Use of Alternative Fuels

My bill, Senate Bill 1675, which would increase the state's use of biodiesel by 2008, continues to progress through the legislature. On May 15<sup>th</sup> the bill passed out of the Senate Appropriations Committee, and it now goes to the Senate floor.

The bill requires that biodiesel, a renewable diesel fuel made from plants, vegetable and cooking oil, be blended into the state's existing diesel fuel supply at a level of 2% by 2008 and 5% by 2010. Biodiesel is clean, renewable, and can be produced in-state on California farmland. By blending it into our existing fuel supply, it will not only improve our air quality, it will help California secure its independence from big oil and over-reliance on oil imports.

California's current dependency on foreign oil exacerbates our vulnerability to oil price spikes. In light of the ever-increasing cost of gas in California and here in San Diego, this is an important measure to relieve our reliance on big oil companies. Increasing amounts of biodiesel in our fuel supply begins a real transition into alternative fuels that can help preserve California's transportation security, public and environmental health, and economy.

Governor Schwarzenegger issued an executive order on April 25<sup>th</sup>, S-06-06, to increase production and use of biomass-created energies. The Governor's order goes hand in hand with my goals to expand the use of renewable alternative fuels. Californians are fed up with outrageous fuel prices. The Governor and I are offering long-term solutions that respond to global changes and expand our supply of transportation fuels.

To learn more about SB 1675, please visit my web site at [www.senate.ca.gov/kehoe](http://www.senate.ca.gov/kehoe) and select the link to "Legislation."

## Governor Signs Kehoe's Bird Flu Preparedness Bill

My bill to appropriate \$7,073,000 in state funds to bolster state and local flu-related preparations and services has been approved by the Governor.

The White House has now released its national plan for pandemic flu. The plan makes it clear that, unlike hurricanes and earthquakes where federal assistance has played a significant role, state and local governments will bear the primary responsibility for managing a widespread human influenza. My bill, SB 409, appropriates \$7 million in immediate funding to fill gaps in state and local preparedness efforts for a public health emergency such as a widespread flu outbreak.

This is an urgency measure, meaning that it will take effect immediately. For more information about SB 409, visit the "Legislation" section of my web site at [www.senate.ca.gov/kehoe](http://www.senate.ca.gov/kehoe).

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## Winners of 2006 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest Announced

On April 21<sup>st</sup> I held an assembly at Dana Middle School to honor the winners of my Annual 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest. I was so pleased to receive more than 850 essays from students throughout the 39<sup>th</sup> District.

Fifth grader Matthew Honig of Benchley Weinberger Elementary School won first place honors for his essay, which included ideas for how to keep San Diego's beaches clean. His essay was inspired by spending a summer as a Jr. Lifeguard. Matthew's grand prize included a Senate Certificate of Recognition as well as a Padres-sponsored goodie bag and prizes from Sea World.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner was Dana Middle School student Alexa Penalosa, and Kimberly Nguyen from Ross Elementary took 3<sup>rd</sup> place honors. Dana Middle School was recognized for submitting the most essays, which earned the school a Gateway computer. Every student who participated in the contest received a Senate Certificate and a gift certificate for Chili's restaurants.

All 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes in my district were invited to participate in the contest, which asked students to write a persuasive letter to their school principal, the editor of a local newspaper, or to me as their Senator regarding why it is important to protect the environment.

I hold the essay contest annually to encourage students to become engaged in important issues, and the contest also satisfies the San Diego Unified School District Literacy Standards.



*Senator Kehoe was joined by Joy Wolf of SeaWorld to present prizes to the winners of the Annual 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest.*

*Left to Right: 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Winner Alexa Penalosa, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Winner Kimberly Nguyen, and 1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner Matthew Honig*

## State Auditor Reports on UC Compensation Practices

The Bureau of State Audits released its findings on the University of California's compensation and disclosure practices. The audit finds that the UC's system for tracking the pay activity of university campuses contains inconsistencies "that limit its usefulness as an oversight tool."

I have confidence that UC President Dr. Dynes is the right person to take decisive action and adjust the current salary and benefit packages. He also needs the time to carry this out. The legislature must be consistent with their oversight of this public system and have better accountability.

You can read the entire report on the Bureau of State Audits' web site at [www.bsa.ca.gov](http://www.bsa.ca.gov)

## Governor Releases May Revision of the State Budget

On May 12<sup>th</sup>, Governor Schwarzenegger released the "May Revise" of the State Budget, which takes into account updated state revenue information. California has taken in an additional \$4.8 billion in revenues this year, and the Governor has proposed a \$131.1 billion budget that includes a \$2.2 billion reserve.

Other highlights of the proposed budget include:

- \$150 million pre-payment for settlement on Proposition 98 education funds
- \$920 million payment for Proposition 42 transportation funds, including \$254 million to local governments for street repairs
- Drops the January proposal to further delay the "pass-through" of the federal SSI/SSP cost-of-living adjustment to take place in January 2007
- Includes \$500 million for additional inmate population and corrections-related health care costs

For further details about the proposed budget, visit [www.ebudget.ca.gov](http://www.ebudget.ca.gov) and select the link to "Governor's Revised Budget."

*For more details on the revised budget,*

*go to:*

[www.ebudget.ca.gov](http://www.ebudget.ca.gov)

## Improving San Diego's Response to Domestic Violence

I recently held a meeting with the Family Justice Center to review specific recommendations to improve the current domestic violence response system in San Diego and throughout California.

In February, I held a meeting with California Attorney General Bill Lockyer and the Family Justice Center regarding a domestic violence report by the *Task Force on Local Criminal Justice Response to Domestic Violence*.

That meeting produced work groups to examine the four areas highlighted by the report that need improvement to better protect domestic violence victims:

1. Obtaining and enforcing restraining orders
2. Prosecuting misdemeanor domestic violence cases
3. Batterer accountability
4. Health practitioner reports

The most recent meeting was held to discuss the recommendations of the work groups headed by local leaders on domestic violence issues.

I will reconvene the work groups in another 6 months and then annually to check the progress we're making to implement solutions to shortcomings in our current response to domestic violence.



**Senator Kehoe and Casey Gwinn discuss local domestic violence response at the Family Justice Center**

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## Kehoe Calls for Restoration of Lifeguard Funding

I recently joined California State Lifeguards and local beach-goers at a press conference to call attention to the drastic budget cuts to state lifeguard services in San Diego County and up and down the California coastline.

The California Department of Parks and Recreation has proposed that seasonal state lifeguard staffing will be cut by 50% in response to state budget cuts. That means that 17 miles of state coastline in San Diego County will be without life-saving supervision from state lifeguards. These cuts would make our beaches less safe.

Every San Diegan knows how crowded our beaches become at this time of year as locals and visitors alike come to enjoy the sand, sun, and surf. Torrey Pines state beach alone draws almost 2 million visitors each year. Imagine, 2 million people visiting Torrey Pines beach every year, swimming, surfing, and enjoying the water – some days without the supervision of a single lifeguard.

While lifeguard staffing on state beaches will be at full strength over Memorial Day weekend, the numbers will drop again right after and stay at the 50% cut until June 30<sup>th</sup>. When the number one cause of death in state parks is drowning, cutting lifeguard hours on our beaches is simply unacceptable.

Join me and urge the Governor and State Parks officials to recognize that public safety includes lifeguard services. You can email the Governor at [governor@governor.ca.gov](mailto:governor@governor.ca.gov).



**Senator Kehoe meets with state lifeguards and beach patrons at Torrey Pines State Beach to discuss the impact of cuts in lifeguard staffing**

## Sign Up for Senator Kehoe's New E-Newsletter

We've improved my E-Newsletter. The E-Newsletter contains the same information and updates on legislation and state issues as my "Kehoe's Corner" newsletter, but in an improved electronic format.

To receive this newsletter by email, please email me at [Senator.Kehoe@sen.ca.gov](mailto:Senator.Kehoe@sen.ca.gov) and include both your email and your mailing address.